The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOLUME XXIV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1920 NUMBER 308

Contents

The Week 201

Editorials
- The Use of a Protest Vote..... 204
- The Condition of an Irish Settlement..... 205
- Thirty-one Republicans on the League..... 207
- Taft and the Supreme Court..... 208

General Articles
- The Eclipse of Progressivism....Herbert Croly 210
- The Friendship That Failed.....Walter Locke 216
- Farmer-Labor: The Project.....William Hard 218

After the Play .....F. H. 220

Reviews of Books
- As a Wise Man Sees Us.....Alvin Johnson 221
- The Island of Sheep.....R. F. A. H. 222
- The Case for Capitalism.....A. J. 224
- A Shell-Shock Novel.....W. H. C. 224

The Week

A MILITARY occupation of Haiti that results in the death of two hundred and fifty natives for every American soldier killed stands utterly condemned by its own figures. It is impossible to believe that the discrepancy between the two casualty lists is accounted for wholly by the superior marksmanship of the Marines. "Indiscriminate killing" and "illegal executions" undoubtedly helped swell the total of 3,250 bandits slain. There is more that the figures do not tell: how many uncounted bandits crawled off to die in the wilderness; how many, tried or untried, were shot as captives; how many were killed escaping from illegal forced labor on the military roads. Some excuse, if any were desirable, could be found for the Marines: they were the military rulers of a half-civilized nation where human life has long been held extremely cheap. The combination was disastrous. The few facts pointing to the guilt of certain Marine officers and men are clear and sinister enough. A complete investigation to unveil the full extent of the savagery in Haiti must be made at once. Secretary Daniels has already started an investigation of his own, by a board of naval and military men. This is investigation by the executive power of itself, and is far from what the situation requires.

AN unsparing Congressional investigation should be started as soon as the session opens in December. The affair confronts us with some facts and many mysteries, the unraveling of which will be slow and difficult. We must know how many of the 3,250 Haitian dead were "armed bandits" and how many ignorant, desperate natives stung to an ill-armed defense of their soil against an incomprehensible invasion. We must learn all about the abominable censorship, the mysteriously lost reports, the "insane" officers, the illegally revived "corvée," the part played by American banking interests, the extent of the "provocation" that made it necessary for the Marines to kill one in every four hundred of the population. We must get at the bottom of the charges of Mr. Harry A. Franck that a large number of our troops were Southerners; the charges of Mr. J. W. Johnson in the Nation that Southern office holders compose a large part of the Haitian administration. These charges bring us face to face with two of the facts that lie at the root of the matter: the Haitians are Negroes, and the South is the foundation of the Wilson administration.

THE fact of American cruelty in Haiti is established; its extent, which remains to be determined, is comparatively unimportant. If we accept our military occupation of Haiti, we must be prepared to accept military atrocities with it. When an alien people are ruled by force, force and savagery are unavoidable. Rule over "inferior" peoples for their good corrupts the "superior" peoples. Amritsar and Balbriggan are earlier examples of this. The real guilt is on a government whose policy makes such barbarities unavoidable. The United States "intervened" in Haiti to restore order, both political and financial, and also, in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine, to prevent such restoration from being accomplished by some other Power. The intervention blossomed into over five years of military occupation and dictation, as well as complete humiliation on the part of Haiti. It is this seizure

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a pitifully weak neighbor, and imposition upon her of a government and a foreign soldiery that constitutes the real crime, and since it is committed by an administration that has in the past seldom refrained from pious sentiments about the rights of small nations it has the added flavor of hypocrisy. What protection have we against a repetition of this? When we participate in some future League of Nations we should not only insist on a scrupulous and active supervision over mandated areas but voluntarily subject our insular possessions and receiverships to such a League.

THE Russian-Polish truce became effective on October 18th. The chief task of each country is from now on to resist pressure that would prevent the armistice from leading to an early peace. The Poles still appear to be playing with fire. Conferences with the Finnish foreign minister revive rumors of a Baltic union. Other rumors, founded on the Vilna episode and the non-existence, at present, of any Lithuanian government, point to plans for a renewal of the cordon of small states, Lithuania, White Russia, Ukraine, with Poland as mainstay. Soviet Russia's obvious play is to avoid giving the slightest pretext for a breaking of the hard-won Riga armistice. Her troops are more successful against Wrangel, whose own reports admit the loss of towns and seaports in the Taurida that would bring a good part of his line back to the front of a month ago. Of the whole Russian situation, what has usually been safe to say is safe to say again: that we know nothing, and are fed on rumors, and on rumors of hopes that subsist solely on rumors themselves, rumors impossible for us to believe unless we secretly wish to. General Budenny is reported to have deserted to Wrangel; General Makhno's desertion to the Soviets remains unconfirmed; a Warsaw-Berlin-London message tells of Soviet peace overtures to Wrangel, and Tchicherin denies them in a cable to the New York American's correspondent three days later.

THE American government will not recognize the compromise of Poles and Russians on their common frontier. It will not consider valid any treaty which disposes of Russian territory without the consent of the Russian people. How that consent must be manifested is not revealed. If, in fulfillment of the State Department's dreams, some all-Russian government comes into power, it is possible that its attempt to reunite all the Russians may take the form of an assertion that Poland and Finland—which we have recognized—were carved off without the consent of the Russian people. And even a fairly liberal anti-Bolshevik government will long for the return of the Baltic provinces and their seaports. We have not recognized the Baltic provinces, but, in some way or other, most of the other Powers have. If it ever grows tired of darkness the State Department is likely to find itself in the position of a surprised ostrich withdrawing its head from ignorance into a much-changed world. And the capacity of this particular ostrich to adapt itself to disagreeable novelties is not conspicuous. If the Soviet government endures, it will be perfectly possible to find an American consul doing business in Pinsk, Russia, when all the rest of the world knows that Pinsk is in Poland.

A FEW weeks ago apologists for the League were enumerating among its virtues the prevention of a Polish-Lithuanian war. Poland is a member of the League, and today her troops are occupying the Lithuanian capital. They do so unofficially, of course. General Zellgouski allowed his Polish-Lithuanian troops to march into Vilna that the city might have recourse to self-determination. Not receiving the approval of Warsaw, General Zellgouski is a mutineer. He has improved his time by setting up a Central-Lithuanian state. He threatens the Lithuanian government. The Allies believe that this tribute to the genius and continued good fortune of d'Annunzio has the backing of the Polish government. Suspicion centres on Marshal Pilsudski, himself a native of Vilna. This is the Fiume of Polish nationalism. And the fate of Fiume itself is still unsettled, after well over a year. Will the Poles ever be pried out of Vilna? Will some hasty plebiscite anchor them there? The obvious comparison is with d'Annunzio, but it was the great Powers themselves, by such wholesale seizures as Shantung and the Saar Valley, that have set the fashion for the raids of marionettes like d'Annunzio and Zellgouski. The Allies are angry—but is not imitation the sincerest flattery?

OVER a million British miners are on strike for a wage increase of two shillings per shift. So end long weeks of negotiation, with the miners out-manoeuvered and stubbornly resolved to enforce that part of their original demand which in the beginning of the negotiations seemed most open to peaceful adjustment. Their first demands were two, and held by them to be inseparable. First, a demand that the coal industry's expected surplus of some £66,000,000 on export coal for the current year should be applied toward a decrease of 14s. 2d. a ton in the price of domestic coal. While the miners' leaders represented this demand as the expression of an unselfish desire to help reduce the cost of living, it was elsewhere interpreted as an attempt to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

force the continuation of government control, dictation of a national policy that properly belonged to Parliament, and a move in the fight for nationalization, upon which the miners are grimly determined. The miners also did not realize that to try to secure this decrease by a strike would eliminate the hoped-for national surplus on which alone the demand was based. The government finally manoeuvered the miners into abandoning this claim. The wage demand meant most to them, and the present strike is on that issue alone.

AND this wage demand, as long as it remained part and parcel of the demand for the decrease in price was not thought of by either miners or government as presenting any difficulty that compromise could not overcome. There was every possibility and all but promises on the part of the government that more pay could be conceded. Admittedly the miners' wages were behind the standards set in earlier arrangements. The government proposed to refer the two-shilling demand to arbitration by an impartial board, provided the miners would agree to a raise conditional on increased output. The operators, by working the poorer seams and withholding capital for development, must bear much of the blame for low output. On the miners' side it must be said that they had reason to distrust the government for its refusal to accept the Sankey scheme. The ballot of the men was overwhelmingly for a strike; it was a referendum that might conceivably have been avoided. But the leaders, having surrendered on one impossible point, stiffened when it came to another far more open to settlement. They are in an uncomfortable, and an unjustifiable position. At the beginning of winter, and at a time when all Europe is in desperate need of coal, the miners can ill afford to make such a show of obstinacy. They had an excellent case for an increase in wages which need not have been pleaded by resort to a strike. Yet there seems to be little bitterness on the part of either government or labor, and a renewal of negotiations would be far from surprising.

WHETHER the Third International gains or loses diplomatic victories, it nearly always splits the socialists of other countries into its own allies and bitter enemies. Its latest triumph, a vote of 237 to 156 by the German Independent Socialist party in favor of adherence to it, divides German socialists into four groups. The Independent Right wing may have to join the majority group or remain powerless. The Left will gain a little by fusion with the Communists. What is the next move? The Government expects trouble, and has expelled Zinoviev and Losovsky, the emissaries from Moscow. The left majority of the Independents is losing no time in making plans for an agreement with the Third International as to their part in the world revolution. The district leaders are being directed to prepare for a strike. The anti-Bolshevik minority prepares a campaign against Bolshevik methods by the "revolutionary" forces of other countries. Revolution pits itself against revolution.

THE LITERARY DIGEST poll among 600,000 voters in the pivotal states of New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and California shows which way the wind is blowing. The returns foreshadow victory for Harding in all of these important states. Besides this, any one who is curious as to the effect of repression on the radical vote will be interested in the strong swing into the Socialist column. "The figures of our poll," says the Digest, "reveal a striking increase in the Socialist vote, which seems to be about doubled in Indiana and Ohio, tripled in New Jersey, Illinois and California, and almost multiplied by five in New York, where the Socialist assemblymen were unseated. . . . A further evidence of a certain drift away from the old parties is the vote of 1,331 for Christensen, the Farmer-Labor candidate." The ousting of the assemblymen did the trick in New York. Speaker Sweet could not have done more to help the Socialists if he had found a package of Bolshevik rubles under his pillow.

THESE are still perilous days for the Constitution, particularly that section of it which promised, perhaps overconfidently, that "no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press." Just now, smarting from a defeat at Duquesne, Pennsylvania, earlier in the year, the Constitution is on top again. Mayor Kincaid of Mount Vernon, New York, vowed that no Socialists should speak in his town, and arrested those who tried to do so. Three members of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Reverend John Haynes Holmes, the Reverend Norman Thomas and Miss Rose Schneidermann, carried on the fight by attempting to speak in violation of the same ordinance, after having been refused a permit. They were arrested, but have now been all released, as the ordinance in question has been declared unconstitutional by a Justice of the White Plains Supreme Court. The Constitution is on top again.

WHERE is the mood that made England's "Hang-the-Kaiser" election possible? What little might be left of that epidemic of noisy hatred should forever be dispelled by the fine gesture of fifty-seven

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Oxford professors and doctors, in a letter to German and Austrian professors. "We now personally approach you," say the Dons, "with a desire to dispel the embitterment of animosities that under the impulse of loyal patriotism may have passed between us. In the field where our aims are one, our enthusiasms the same . . . . we can surely look to be reconciled, and the fellowship of learning offers a road which may . . . . lead to wider sympathy and better understanding between our kindred nations." In a world that has, to be sure, forgotten much of its hatred, but not remembered to renounce it publicly and generously, these words are a breath of fresh air.

The Use of a Protest Vote

THERE are hosts of sincere and able progressives who intend to vote for Harding. They argue that, whatever the appearance of unity on Election Day, the Republican party remains fundamentally divided between progressive and reactionary groups. By sticking to the party they retain a fighting chance of wresting the power away from the reactionaries who forced the nomination of Harding. There are other hosts who intend to vote for Cox. These argue that even if Cox does not succeed in establishing a title to progressive leadership, the reactionary quality of the Harding administration will in four years drive so many progressives toward the Democratic party as to fix its progressive character. They hold that it is worth while to give present support to the party, for the sake of its potentialities for future service. These are arguments worth considering. But they leave us unconvinced. The signs of the times seem to indicate that Harding will be elected by a majority so large that the reactionaries now in charge of his campaign will be under no necessity of making substantial concessions to the progressives. They also indicate that the Democratic party will not only be defeated, but will be left discordant, the Cox faction and the Wilson faction each attributing disaster to the other. We may hope for the best, that a Democratic party reinvigorated by defeat may be able to offer a real fight in 1924. But it would be childish to exclude from our calculations the possibility—or probability—that we are in for not only four years, but eight years of Harding, of Harding under the management of the elder statesmen.

Certainly, the possibility that we are in for a period of reaction, prolonged and untempered, must be faced by every progressive who sees no hope in Harding and has no faith in Cox. There remains upon him the obligation of making his vote count, nevertheless, for the future, since it cannot count for the present. One may be momentarily tempted to turn away from politics in disgust, or at least throw one's protest vote haphazard. Neither course, however, is satisfactory. There have been times when abstention from voting has exerted a positive influence, as in the case of the recent Assembly elections, when the Socialists were returned chiefly because Democrats and Republicans who could not approve the exclusion of Socialists from the Assembly refrained from voting. There have been times when what was recognized to be only a protest vote for a minor party made some impression upon the leaders of the major parties. But such tactics are appropriate to a time when all that is needed is to chastise parties temporarily aberrant from principle, which may promptly be brought back to sanity. Today every progressive is forced to resolve the question whether either of the two great historical parties can adjust itself to the governmental requirements of the present and the future. Do we need a new party, representing new interests, to function for a while merely as an organ of criticism, but eventually to occupy second place, and first when occasion favors? The two old parties are not immortal. Possibly one or the other of them is even now surviving only by inertia. If that were in fact the case, could they give better evidence of it than by such campaigns as Harding and Cox are conducting?

The times are auspicious for a third party movement, and progressives who cannot accept either Harding or Cox have the votes to help it on its way. But we have two competing groups aspiring to the place of a serious third party: the Socialist and the Farmer-Labor. Will either do, or is it a matter of indifference which receives the progressive support? That we do not believe. According to our ultimate objects, we shall find that the one or the other deserves preference. And the prefernce turns not so much on the merits of the candidates, as on the chances of a sound and vigorous party growth.

The Socialist party has already a long record of valiant and patient struggling against heavy odds. It has demonstrated its ability to survive under the most adverse circumstances. Its terrible unpopularity during the war appears to have driven away from it only a fraction of its adherents. The party may in the near future win victories more striking than those of the past, which are by no means inconsiderable. But after making every allowance for potentialities not yet measured, we still see no reason for believing that the Socialist party in America can ever become a serious competitor of the two old parties. It is a sect, rather than a party. Its doctrinal basis has been long fixed, and how-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever adroit the party statesmen may be in distinguishing between ultimate aims and immediate aims, and in adjusting the latter to the times, the fact remains that the ultimate aims act to repel from the party important elements whose support is necessary to the prosperity of any real third party. The Socialists may make important progress with the city proletariat, but this is a country in which the small farm owner and the tenant farmer are in a position to wield a political power disproportionate to their numbers. These classes are rather uneasy in their political allegiance, as the growth of the Nonpartisan League and the primary elections in Georgia and Texas indicate. But they are not likely to be drawn strongly toward a party with the doctrine and traditions of the Socialists. Neither does that doctrine offer promise of transforming itself into a progressivism that will broaden its appeal. It is fundamentally, and we believe permanently, revolutionary. It is not content, like progressivism, to take things as they are and by elimination of privilege and democratization of control and of opportunity to evolve a better order without preliminary destruction.

The Farmer-Labor party, on the other hand, has no solid nucleus of zealous partisans, inured to discouragement and defeat. Its organization is inchoate, its doctrinal scheme tentative. It lacks efficient means of publicity of its own, and its only chance of laying its case before the general electorate lies in its movements becoming news that a not too hospitable press would find it unprofitable to disregard. These are circumstances that presage a vote much lighter than the merits of its program and the character of its candidates should command. To vote the Farmer-Labor ticket will be pioneering, and whatever may have been the case earlier in our history, Americans today do not take kindly to pioneering.

And yet, is it not evident that the Farmer-Labor party holds the ground on which the third party of the future must take its stand? Every political party that is to thrive must have as its basis some substantial interest. The Republican party has always rested upon the solid basis of the manufacturing interest. The Democratic party was most potent politically when it stood most firmly on the landed interests of the Old South, combined with the commercial interests of the Northern Atlantic seaboard. Today the interests that are coming to political consciousness are those of organized labor and of the independent farmer and the agricultural tenant. The new party of the future, it seems clear, must be one that can combine those interests and express them.

For the present, it is true, the Farmer-Labor party falls far short of concentrating these new political interests to its support. The bulk of the insurgent farmer vote is still attached to the nonpartisan policy, seeing a superior advantage in conquering now one, now the other old party machine. The official leadership of organized labor still hopes to make progress by the policy of rewarding the friends and punishing the enemies of labor in the existing parties. But whatever temporary successes may be won by such policies, the limitations upon them are obvious. When the Nonpartisan League captures one of the old parties, the result is to drive the non-agrarian elements into the other party. Nonpartisanship results after all in the formation of a new party. In exactly the same way, if ever organized labor really subjugates to its will any old party organization, a fusion will be effected against it. The farmers and laborers cannot in the long run play politics without launching a party of their own.

The Farmer-Labor party is a first step in that direction. It may turn out to be a very short step, if the voters who would naturally favor it are unwilling to give their votes to a cause which may have no immediate chance of even partial successes. But those who are willing to work for remote ends will recognize that every vote cast for the Farmer-Labor party will bring us nearer to the condition in which politics really means something, in which we shall not have to choose between Tweedledee and Tweedledum, but between live, self-conscious interests, presenting real programs for the upbuilding of the national life.

The Condition of an Irish Settlement

IT is now about forty years since Parnell forced the issue of Irish self-government to the surface of British political discussion. From 1880 until the present time the question of how much independence the British Parliament would or would not grant to Ireland has remained on the top or just below the top of Imperial British politics. It has ruptured parties, ruined the careers of statesmen, distracted public opinion and in certain respects perverted the normal course of British political development. At the end of it all, Ireland is in open revolt, British Imperial authority in the island defied as never before, and the British public, as a trustworthy English correspondent of the New Republic pointed out in our last issue, irresolute, dismayed and heartily sick of the calamitous contest. The average Briton longs to be well rid of it, but he cannot make up his mind to approve the mag-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nanimous act which would free him from his costly and impossible responsibility. He is, consequently, driven to endorse coercion. But he is far from easy about the brutal method by which alone British government in Ireland can maintain a semblance of authority. His mixture of tedium with exasperation is the natural result of his inability to quiet his conscience over the necessary violence of Dublin Castle without abandoning the attempt to govern Ireland at all.

The fact that the successful insurrection in Ireland irritates and bores the average Englishman instead of infuriating him, will, of course, encourage the Irish nationalists to persist. No doubt a mixture of irritation and tedium may breed temporary callousness to the means which are used to obtain relief, but when these means fail an irritated and bored public is not likely to insist indefinitely in its ill-doing. If the Irish can maintain their insurrection without succumbing to the error of excessive reprisal, it looks as if their rulers would finally, as a consequence of the ignominy and futility of the prevailing policy, be driven to adopt the course which, as we believe, has the best chance of bringing about a permanently amicable adjustment of the relations between Ireland and Great Britain. That course is to withdraw the British troops, at least from those regions which are in insurrection against Imperial authority. This is the policy recently recommended by Lord Grey and it has apparently become the only practicable alternative to ruthless, arbitrary and necessarily bloody coercion. The present government will never adopt it, but it is to our mind so clearly the only behavior towards Ireland consistent with the increasing democratic convictions of the British people, with their better political traditions and with the ultimate security of the British Empire that confusion and disaster will overtake the government which refuses to adopt it.

The withdrawal of the troops is an essential condition of a permanent Irish settlement because it is the only effective way of acknowledging the wrong done to Ireland by the original occupation and the only way of bringing to an end its disastrous consequences. As soon as the government withdraws the troops, but not until then, the Irish people will enjoy the privilege of having something decisive to say about their collective destiny. That is a privilege to which under every democratic principle they are fully entitled. Before the war under the political conventions which then obtained, the British government might have disarmed Irish resistance by a less drastic concession, but after the breaking up of the Empires of Central Europe, a government, which is so completely repudiated by its subjects as is British government in Ireland, must begin its reformation by the abdication rather than by the attempted qualification of its authority. Ireland or that part of it which repudiates British dominion has attained a national self-consciousness and a degree of moral independence which forbids it to accept any settlement as a gift from British authority. It demands as a condition of future political cooperation complete freedom of negotiation. It cannot obtain freedom of negotiation unless the troops are withdrawn.

The withdrawal of the troops would, of course, be equivalent to a recognition of the independence of Ireland, for Imperial authority would vanish with the troops. But it would not involve the acquiescence by the British Empire in any policy which the Irish national government would subsequently adopt with respect to Great Britain. The relation between Ireland and Great Britain would after the withdrawal of the troops become the subject of negotiation. In that negotiation it would be the task of the British government either to persuade the Irish to accept a Canadian status within the Empire or, if that is impossible, to negotiate a treaty analogous to the treaty which determines the relationship between the United States and Cuba. It would seem, considering the essential economic and political interdependence of Ireland and Great Britain that the interests and forces which made for an agreement would rise superior to the interests and forces which interfered with an agreement. But, of course, that is only a guess. It would be foolhardy to promise or predict a satisfactory outcome to the negotiation from the point of view of British Unionism. The new Irish government might adopt an attitude towards Great Britain analogous to that of a Balkan state towards its neighbors rather than analogous to that of Canada with relation to the Empire, or Cuba towards the United States. In that event would not a British government in the interest of British security be justified in resuming a policy of coercion? And would it not by the withdrawal of the troops have enormously increased the amount of bloodshed and suffering which coercion would involve?

For our part we cannot understand why an immediately irreconcilable attitude on the part of an independent Ireland towards Great Britain would under existing circumstances justify a policy of coercion. If Great Britain ever found herself again exposed to attack from an enemy as dangerous as the German Empire was in 1914 and if an independent Ireland was willing to lend military and naval assistance to the enemies of Great Britain, then under the rules of war the Irish would expose themselves to any military and naval reprisal which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

British security seemed to require. But just at present British Sea Power is irresistible. France and the United States are the only nations which could conceivably use Ireland as a submarine base against Great Britain and for the present a collision between Great Britain and either of its associates in the late war is inconceivable. The British government has, consequently, enough time to win the friendship and the cooperation even of an Ireland which was disposed to be for a while irreconcilable. Neither do we believe that by abandoning military control and trusting to negotiation she would be running any considerable risk. She would always have Ireland at her mercy in the event of ultimate irreconcilability and in that event the Irish would suffer economically and in every other way far more from the breakdown of the negotiations than would the British.

The immediate threat to the security of the British Empire comes not from the abandonment of military rule over rebellious peoples but from its continuation. What Britons have to fear is the disintegration of their Empire in so far as it is based upon force rather than its overthrow by external attack. Wherever they can British statesmen will do well to substitute, as they are trying to substitute in Egypt, government by consent for merely Imperial authority. The existing relationship between the British Empire and its self-governing dominions is the most successful and instructive example of an essentially moral yet still effective tie among substantially independent peoples which history has to record. This is the novel ingredient of British Imperial politics and it is only by acting in the light of this admirable precedent that British statesmanship can prevent Ireland from remaining a source of weakness and demoralisation to the British commonwealth.

Thirty-one Republicans on the League

AMONG the thirty-one distinguished Republicans who announce that they favor a league but prefer Mr. Harding there are not a few who have exercised the indubitable privilege of changing their minds. That is what a debate is for, and it would be a sin against the spirit of democratic discussion to tease them for listening to argument. Nor is it fair to accuse them of putting partisanship above principle, for they may well believe that even if Cox were elected the constitution of the Senate will be such as to prevent the kind of ratification for which the Democrats stand. There is nothing particularly inconsistent in their belief that under present political conditions the League has as good prospects with Harding as it would have with Cox. Like the rest of us in a year of extraordinary confusion they are voting, not exactly as they would like, but the best way they know how among very poor alternatives. Almost everybody of sincere conviction is in that plight this year. Does any one for example think that the pro-Leaguers voting for Cox are happy? Not a bit of it. They know perfectly well that the Democrats selected a man who had to work up an enthusiasm for the League. Are the irreconcilables happy? They pretend to be, but they know well enough that they are going to be bumped after election. Are those who are voting a protest happy? We shall not pretend that they are. Then why should any one quarrel with the thirty-one eminent Republicans for making the best of it?

They too are compelled to make bricks without straw, and so far as their votes are concerned they are doing just what the rest of us are doing. But citizenship is a good deal more than a matter of votes. It is fundamentally a matter of education. What men contribute to the thought of a nation is subject to more critical examination than what, given the party system, they contribute by their votes. Now among the thirty-one are educators and political leaders. Some of these have been the directors of the propaganda of the League to Enforce Peace, and from them we are entitled to receive not merely advice about voting but light on the question. Does their present position square with the idea of a league to enforce peace?

When they oppose Article X they are not in conflict with their original program. To be sure Mr. Lowell, the President of Harvard and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the League, did defend Article X in his debate with Senator Lodge (March 19, 1919). But the program of his society does not contemplate a round-robin guarantee like Article X. The League to Enforce Peace advocates force not to guarantee any particular settlement but to compel every nation to appear before a tribunal before engaging in war. There is then a great difference between the Covenant as drafted and the ideas of Mr. Lowell and his associates. The Wilson plan is a league to stabilize the settlements of Paris; the Lowell-Taft plan is a league to enforce inquiry, delay, publicity and conciliation. The Covenant embodies the Lowell-Taft plan, but adds to it the principle of Article X. In rejecting Article X Mr. Lowell is returning to his original position.

Does he stop there? Let us examine what that position implies. It implies, does it not, a covenant to go to war in a certain case (the refusal of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nation to use the machinery of conciliation). All the adherents of the League to Enforce Peace (ourselves included) believe in an obligation to employ physical force. Mr. Root, so far as we can learn, has never believed in it, but Messrs. Taft, Lowell, Hoover, Straus, Wickersham certainly have believed in it. So did Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Lowell wrote in 1917:

> Human society has a right to protect itself, by compelling, if need be, a nation from resorting to arms . . . before its grievance has been brought before the bar of the world.

Mr. Taft wrote:

> Even if the risk of war to the United States would be greater (see A League to Enforce Peace, p. 283, by Robert Goldsmith; Macmillan 1917), by entering a League to Enforce Peace . . . does not the United States have a duty . . . etc., etc.

Any one who examines the moral drawn by Mr. Roosevelt after September, 1914, from the invasion of Belgium will find the same insistence on a posse comitatus to enforce peace.

Now these views mean that under the conditions specified Congress must declare war. The obligation is certainly superior in a moral sense, and probably also in a legal sense, to the sovereign independence of Congress. Do Mr. Lowell and his associates still hold to this idea? Their statement is not clear. They object to Article X because it binds Congress to declare war in one case. They are silent about the other articles of the covenants which bind Congress to declare war in a different case. Why do they object to guaranteeing territorial integrity, and why do they not object, if they do not object, to guaranteeing the enforcement of delay?

They ought to make clear the distinction. It does not turn on the sovereignty of Congress. By eliminating Article X they are not restoring the complete independence of Congress, for that independence is abrogated also by Article XVI, viz:

> Article XVI.—Should any member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles XII, XIII or XV, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an *act of war* against all other members of the League. . . .

Mr. Lowell, in common with every other believer in a league to enforce peace, purposes to limit the sovereignty of Congress. As a rational man he proposes to limit it in some cases and not in others. Now what is the real objection to limiting it in the case of Article X rather than in the case of Article XVI?

There is a general and a specific objection. The general objection is that the whole tendency of Article X is to freeze the world in status quo. The specific objection is that the status quo created at Paris is not durable enough to be worth a guarantee. Mr. Wilson, who has argued himself into the belief that the Treaties contrived at Paris are fundamentally sound, was quite right in wishing to underwrite them. But to anyone who regards these settlements as utterly unstable, the plea for American force to back them must be rejected.

It comes to this: the objection to Article X as an abrogation of sovereignty is a confused objection when put forward by a believer in Article XVI; the objection to Article X because it attempts to make rigid an impossible world settlement is the real objection, but it is not mentioned in the statement of the thirty-one eminent Republicans.

Taft and the Supreme Court

> Mr. Wilson is in favor of a latitudinarian construction of the Constitution of the United States, to weaken the protection it should afford against Socialist raids upon property rights. . . .
>
> He has made three appointments to the Supreme Court. He is understood to be greatly disappointed in the attitude of the first of these [Mr. Justice McReynolds] upon such questions. The other two [Mr. Justice Brandeis and Mr. Justice Clarke] represent a new school of constitutional construction, which, if allowed to prevail, will greatly impair our fundamental law. Four of the incumbent Justices are beyond the retiring age of seventy, and the next President will probably be called upon to appoint their successors. There is no greater domestic issue in this election than the maintenance of the Supreme Court as the bulwark to enforce the guarantee that no man shall be deprived of his property without due process of law. . . .

THESE are the views of ex-President Taft, reputedly one of our greatest authorities in Constitutional Law. The lay reader of his article in the October Yale Review might naturally assume that Justices Brandeis and Clarke are a pair of firebrands, who, as members of the Supreme Court, have enunciated novel and revolutionary doctrines. If Mr. Taft's words mean anything they mean that a study of the opinions of the Supreme Court will show that Brandeis and Clarke form a group apart from the other members of the Court, and, particularly, that in cases involving the due process clause these two Justices have gone off on frolics of their own—frolics strange and disruptive.

Suppose, however, some lay reader, with a curiosity exceeding his respect for Mr. Taft's weighty ipse dixit, retained some responsible lawyer to analyze the constitutional attitude of Brandeis and Clarke as revealed by the recorded decisions. Such a lawyer would at once put Mr. Justice Clarke on one side without a detailed examination. He would say that Clarke's sober and conventional attitude is sufficiently attested by the fact that on the gravest

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

issue which has recently divided the Supreme Court —the protection of freedom of speech when invoked by so-called radicals—he was the Court's spokesman of views pleasing even to Attorney General Palmer. But what of Brandeis? A careful lawyer would report that at the bar Brandeis achieved distinction not as the propounder of new constitutional doctrines, but as the inventor of a new technique in the application of settled constitutional law—an innovation of *method* which received the unanimous approval of a Supreme Court containing lawyers of such unquestionable orthodoxy as Fuller, Brewer and Peckham. And what is Brandeis's record as Justice? That means a study of his dissents, for only in these can we discover "the new school" which, according to Mr. Taft, he represents. For Mr. Taft can hardly mean that Brandeis could have corrupted the constitutional views of appointees of Cleveland, McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft.

Brandeis dissented alone in only four cases, he and Clarke alone in six more—in all other cases Brandeis was associated with one or more of the senior Justices. And what were the ten cases? Of the four exclusive Brandeis dissents one involved a novel question of equity jurisdiction, one a claim against the government in which Brandeis held for a railroad against the government, two involved a delimitation between federal and state power and Brandeis took a rather conservative "states' rights" point of view; of the six Brandeis-Clarke dissents two involved questions of procedure and four concerned interpretation of franchises—issues as to which courts everywhere and always show differences of opinion. Not one of these ten cases involved the questions which particularly trouble Mr. Taft—the due process clause—not one of them involved any novel constitutional construction, not one of them was among the cases raising great public issues. Ten negligible dissents—out of a total of over seventeen hundred decisions! The utter disregard for accuracy in Mr. Taft's accusation shows that Professor Taft—teacher of Constitutional Law at Yale—does not control the irresponsibility of politician Taft.

But, after all, so much heat in Mr. Taft must have some provocation. Brandeis is the easy target, but what Mr. Taft really means is not that Brandeis brought new views to the Court, but that he brought new strength to an old conflict—the conflict between the liberals and the hidebound. The Supreme Court is hopelessly split, in constant throes of clash on vital issues. Social and economic questions divide the Justices according to the largeness of view with which they are able to dissociate the requirements of the Constitution from their personal bias. The last few years have shown many such divisions and the future is not likely to lessen them. What does Mr. Taft mean by his general language about "Socialist raids upon property rights"? Does he mean that he agrees with the nullification of the federal child labor law, that he agrees with the "school of constitutional construction" which invalidated the stock dividend tax and upheld the Espionage convictions in the Abrams, Schaffer and Pierce cases? Does Mr. Taft, who avows belief in the necessity of trade unions in the abstract, support the Hitchman case which throws all the weight of the injunction against unionization in the concrete? On these and kindred issues Mr. Taft will be called upon to act, and perhaps cast a deciding vote, should President Harding make him Mr. Justice Taft.

And we are entitled to know the answers to these specific questions *now*. For Mr. Taft justly says there is no greater domestic issue in this election than the personnel of the Supreme Court in the coming years. Mr. Taft deserves our gratitude for his candor in recognizing that the Supreme Court involves political issues to be discussed like other political issues. In 1912, Mr. Taft was shocked that Roosevelt should dare drag the Court into the political arena. But now Mr. Taft warns us that no issue is more important than the views of the candidates as to future Justices. Of course that means we must study past decisions, the line-up of the Justices, their attitude towards economic ("property") questions, the attitude of likely appointees towards such questions. Not only may specific decisions be popularly considered, but the justification of the whole function of final law making or unmaking exercised by the Supreme Court can hardly escape scrutiny. Mr. Taft has now made respectable what was heretofore tabooed. The door to the Holy of Holies has been opened. Others will follow where Mr. Taft's profanation leads.

The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1920, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT; ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER

EDITORS
HERBERT CROLY — CHARLES MERZ
FRANCIS HACKETT — WALTER LIPPMANN
ALVIN JOHNSON — PHILIP LITTELL
SIGNE TOKSVIG, Assistant Editor

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FIVE DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS, CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, SIX DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE; REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Eclipse of Progressivism

I.

THE chief distinguishing aspect of the Presidential campaign of 1920 is the eclipse of liberalism or progressivism as an effective force in American politics. In every previous election, at least since 1896, one candidate or one party advanced a valid claim for support of those voters who believed that the public welfare demanded more or less drastic changes in national organization and policy; and since 1904 the preponderant preference of this progressive vote has determined the result of the election. In 1920, however, the voters with progressive opinions are confused, scattered, distracted and impotent. The Democratic candidate is bidding for their support; but his bid is low and, considering the record of his party, of more than doubtful cash value. It attracts few former progressives except those who are Democrats first and progressives second. On the other hand the Republican candidate not only dares to defy progressivism by being unmistakably reactionary, but he is counting on his partiality for private business and his renunciation of any meddling with it in the public interest to win the election for him. It is this fact which most clearly betrays and proves the contemporary political impotence of progressivism.

Harding's frank resurrection of pre-Roosevelt Republicanism is a natural result of the practically confessed political bankruptcy of every group of progressives from those of the extreme right to those of the extreme left. Progressivism or liberalism is fundamentally the attempt to mould social life in the light of the best available knowledge and in the interest of a humane ideal. It lives by the definite formulation of convictions, by the initiation of specific programs and by the creation of opportunities to try them out. It is necessarily aggressive. In order to be successfully aggressive it must know what it wants; it must know how to get what it wants; and it must be willing to make the sacrifices which are necessary for the success of its aspirations and plans. The various progressive groups are no longer sure or clear about what they want. They do not know how to get what they want; nor are they willing to pay the price. Their political futility is born of the equivocal meaning of American liberalism, its failure to keep abreast of the best available social knowledge and its inability to interpret candidly the lessons of its own checkered career.

The Roosevelt progressive party was an extremely composite political camp-meeting. It included not only every shade of liberalism but almost every degree of conservatism. It sheltered millions of Mr. Roosevelt's personal followers who never possessed any sincere or intelligent grasp of progressive principles. Those who may recall the spectacle of such political heathen as the present directors of the New York Sun, the Chicago Tribune and the Philadelphia North American standing at Armageddon and battling for the Lord will take off their hats to Theodore Roosevelt as the evangelist of a progressive faith. But too often he beguiled rather than convinced his converts, and they soon fell away from him or he from them. The party never possessed any body of common conviction or of economic impulse sufficient to preserve its members from backsliding during the intervals between camp meetings. Mr. Roosevelt himself by his behavior before and during the convention of 1916 took away from the remnant of the party its integrity of principle. He was willing to sacrifice essential progressive interests and convictions to the satisfaction of an intense personal animosity to the President and the Democratic party. The result was to pass on to Mr. Wilson the temporary leadership of American progressivism. The mass of progressive voters rallied to the support of the Democratic candidate as the most promising way out of a bad business. But they never entirely trusted him and his party. Nor did they accept without substantial qualifications his formulation of progressive principles. He finally justified these misgivings. By his behavior since the armistice he, like Mr. Roosevelt, forced his progressive supporters to choose between their loyalty to their principles and their loyalty to him. He shattered what was left of American progressivism as a coherent body of conviction. The hodge-podge of factions and sects which remain of the progressive movement know neither their own minds nor the dangerous new world in which they live.

The behavior of these groups during the primary campaign betrayed their political negligibility. Throughout the early months of 1920 an unusually large, disinterested and intelligent mass of progressive opinion, knowing that the existing problems of American domestic and foreign policy needed more liberal and statesmanlike treatment than they would receive from the dominant leadership of either party, looked around for some effective political embodiment of their point of view. They finally concentrated on Mr. Hoover—himself

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an almost perfect mouthpiece of both their misgivings and their liberal convictions. Yet they failed from the start to impart any vital impulse to Mr. Hoover's candidacy. For the candidate with the undoubted approval of the majority of his supporters early announced that he was first, last and always a good party man and a liberal only in so far as liberalism did not conflict with party loyalty. This was what the politicians wanted to know. They could and did ignore and defy him and his supporters just as they always will defy such docile and well-behaved insurrections against their authority. Neither did they lose anything by their defiance. In the end the Republican machine secured the support of Mr. Hoover and most of his followers without paying for it even in an issue of irredeemable paper promises. When Mr. Hoover rallied to a candidate such as Harding, middle-of-the-road liberalism skidded far away from the middle of the road. It did not stop skidding until it almost reached the declivity on the extreme right, and it is now engaged in maintaining its balance by shutting its eyes to the dangerous actualities of its situation.

The factions and sects who were ready and anxious to break away from the older parties did not succeed in putting up a better showing for liberalism in politics than did their more amenable former associates. The Committee of 48 started out expressly to capitalize liberal and radical discontent with the existing parties and to formulate a program which would focus and clarify the new progressivism. But it did not start with the support of enough voters to constitute by itself a formidable political group. Its few thousands of urban middle class members were politically negligible unless they could adjust their own program to that of some large body of wage-earners and farmers. In July at Chicago they tried and failed to accomplish this adjustment. Although they themselves represented only an insignificant fraction of the middle class they insisted on a middle-class program—one which ignored the fact that no mere redistribution of property will give the needed dignity and power to labor. The original group separated after the usual manner of progressives into several smaller sects, the largest of which joined the Farmer-Labor party while the others, deprived even of this frail habitation, were left completely exposed to the inclemency of the political weather.

Thus those liberals who declared war on the existing parties proved as incapable of imparting an effective political expression to their convictions as did those liberals who put their Democracy or Republicanism first. American progressives seem unable either to dispense with party organizations or to control them in the interest of a liberal purpose. Fifty years of reforming agitation, during which in the great majority of cases the reformers have had to fight the national parties, have left those organizations with their prestige unimpaired. The party politicians are for the time being completely triumphant over their progressive adversaries and they are consequently fairly wallowing in the trough of equivocal verbosity which the eclipse of aggressive liberalism permits them to substitute for the honest definition of conflicting issues. Their success makes it look very much as if they and their combination of realistic machine methods with unlimited patriotic pretense must represent something more fundamental in the American democracy than the reformers and progressives have represented.

II.

As a progressive democrat whose faith survives the contemporary eclipse of progressivism I am not willing to impute the triumph of unreformed and unrepentant party politics and economic privilege to the superior reality of their principles. It is due rather to the unreality which liberals have allowed to pervade liberalism. They have not studied the meaning of their experience and failures during the last twenty-five years. They have not as the result of this experience divined the need of adopting a more radical and realistic view of the nature and object of a liberal agitation under the conditions of the American democracy. They accepted in the beginning and continue to accept certain assumptions about the seat of effective power in the American commonwealth and the relation between the state and social progress which condemn them to remain either the uneasy accomplices or the impotent enemies of the powers that be in American society. Progressives have assumed that the American commonwealth, as now instituted and operated, is a complete and essentially classless democracy whose citizens can cure its ailments and adjust its conflicts by virtue exclusively of political action, agitation and education. This assumption they share with their adversaries. It has falsified and will continue to falsify the American progressive movement. If progressives wish to vindicate their claim to serve as indispensable agents of American national fulfillment they will need consciously to abandon it.

The American commonwealth ought to be, as its apologists insist that it is, an essentially complete democracy in which class divisions exist only to be overcome. The more aspiring American political leaders have always hoped and aimed to create a state which was capable of curing all its conflicts and ailments by the use of political remedies. Dur-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the period before the Civil War when natural resources were still so abundant that all smaller classes were merged into the dominant class of the pioneer farmer, merchant or manufacturer, the American commonwealth came nearer to being an equalitarian democracy than any previously existing state. But it never succeeded even at its best in living up to the idea of the more democratic of its founders; and now that its rich inheritance of natural resources is so largely dissipated or appropriated, the existing American union fails as completely to be a flexible, classless and consummate democracy as do the older European states. Our existing institutions are, it is plain, actually provoking class divisions and conflicts similar to those which have existed in undemocratic societies. These divisions and conflicts have steadily increased during the past fifty years and the state has not only done nothing to cure them, but it has done nothing to prevent them from becoming more numerous and more acute.

The class cleavage is spreading and intensifying in certain respects because of our existing institutions. It is spreading because the existing national economy is too largely a one class economy and the existing state too largely a one class state. Liberalism has always believed that popular self-government can ultimately overcome such a partial appropriation of the state by one class; and I would be the last to suggest the abandonment of this article in the liberal creed. But just at present popular self-government is sick, and as long as it is sick, it lacks the recuperative power to come to the assistance of a divided society. Class cleavage born of one-class domination itself poisons the democratic government which should be able to cure its own maladies. Political democracy must call to its assistance social and industrial democracy in order to regain its health. Those progressives who refuse a radical diagnosis of the sickness of political democracy will cease to be progressives. If they wish to renew the original formative American ideal—that of a moralized democracy righteously triumphant over class divisions—they must admit the temporary need of strengthening the wage-earners to resist capitalist domination and so of helping to restore a wholesome balance of economic and social power in the American commonwealth.

The excessive preponderance of one class has impaired the credit of that circulating medium upon which the whole system of democratic values rests. It has impaired the vitality of opinion and discussion by depriving them of their indispensable nourishment. It has deprived the American public of a full and fair account of the news about industrial and social conflicts. It has to a large extent substituted a policy of intimidation for the former patient and good humored toleration of radical criticism of existing institutions and drastic proposals for their reform. These departures from the American tradition have so far impaired the ability of American public opinion to understand its ailments and provide appropriate cures that the remedy must derive in part from an independent source.

Whenever an industrial conflict involves the majority of the employees in an important industry and so threatens to raise a question between the organized employer and employees as to the future control of the industry, the newspapers both in their reporting of the news and their comments on it line up with the employers and accept a class interpretation of the controversy and of its salient facts. With few exceptions they followed this course in respect to the steel and coal strikes of last year and prejudged those controversies in a sense prejudicial to organized labor. Moreover this prejudice implied a condemnation of the strikers much more severe than that which is ordinarily visited on the unpopular party in an industrial conflict. Public opinion was induced by the newspapers to condemn both strikes as anti-social conspiracies against the public welfare. There was a successful attempt to intimidate opinion and to prevent any but one side from obtaining a fair hearing. The result in both cases was a solution disadvantageous to organized labor and favorable to the growth of the previously existing class cleavage. The settlements have only prepared the way for a renewal of the conflict as soon as the defeated strikers consider conditions favorable.

These instances convinced me of the futility of expecting the American government to heal the class cleavage through the action exclusively of the existing machinery of political self-government. American law and practice place economic and social power preponderantly in the hands of one class. The class exploits the organization and shibboleths of democracy in order to disqualify any attack on its autocratic authority in industry as anti-social agitation. Its ownership of the press enables it to fasten the stigma of disloyalty upon wage earners who are threatening in the interest of their own independence the existing control of industry, or upon publicists who insist on the need of a radical redistribution of economic power. Its ownership of the party machines enables it to prevent any radical industrial issue from becoming the subject of controversy between the major parties. In so far as the class cleavage is based on real class grievances, the stability of the American state is being compromised. The continuation of this sacrifice of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moral order to the preservation intact of the existing distribution of economic and social power will end by emasculating democracy, by converting the existing state into a completely and irrevocably class organization and by rendering ultimately inevitable violent class warfare.

III.

If the foregoing analysis is correct, the American Commonwealth is the partial victim of the preponderance and the dominion of one class, which while preserving the forms has corrupted the substance of popular self-government. Instead of beginning by recognizing the legitimacy of this perversion of democracy, progressivism must begin by repudiating it. The one effective way of repudiating it is to call in another class to redress the balance. The one group whose interests, whose numbers and whose existing social disfranchisement qualify it to redress the balance is that of the workers. It is important for them to become conscious of the need of collective class action, not for the purpose of undermining the loyalty of the wage-earners to the state, but for the purpose of creating in a redistribution of power among classes the needed foundation for an ultimate class concert. For labor and liberalism alike, class rule, disguised by protective coloration to look like traditional democracy, is the common enemy. They need to make common cause against it. The future political power of liberalism depends upon its ability to secure the voting support of those who live by labor, including under the phrase those who work with the body and with the mind and those who work on the farm and in the office as well as in the factory. The workers on their side will remain incapable of assuming either the full political or the social responsibility of American citizens unless they play their part in bringing about such a partnership. The lack of it accounts for the political impotence both of labor and of liberalism. Its consummation as an effective political force is the all-important task of progressive American democrats.

It is, however, the liberals rather than labor who should initiate such a partnership. In order to bring it about the majority of American liberals will have to alter their attitude towards the only organized and articulate group of workers. That attitude has usually been unsympathetic and unintelligent. The great majority of American progressives are educated and comparatively well-to-do business and professional men. They have never sought social contacts with the leaders of organized labor and their understanding of the wage-earners' point of view has suffered from ignorance of the impulses, necessities and the ideas which give form to labor unionism. They have regarded the contest between the employers and their organized employees as at bottom a fight between two social groups of equal power, both of which tended to pursue their class interests unscrupulously and both of which need regulative discipline in the public interest. Their proposed method of dealing with the contest has never gone further than some measure of compulsory arbitration or collective bargaining under the protection of the state. They have not regarded the participation of the workers in the management of the industry as an essential part of a democratic industrial policy and of democratic education for citizenship. They have always considered the intrusion of unionized wage-earners into politics as an example of disrupting class organization in what should be a classless democracy.

As long as liberals determine their behavior towards the labor movement by the foregoing ideas there is no chance of a political and social partnership. The conscious organized worker regards himself and rightly regards himself and his fellows not as a selfish group which is extorting all it can from the community, but as a group which, under the conditions of a modern industrial society, is now occupying the firing line in the battle for human liberation. The next advance in the art of human association demands the introduction into capitalist industry of the same government by the consent of the governed as that which the founders of the American republic intended to introduce into the state. If liberalism implies an interest in human liberation, the wage-earners who are fighting the battle for this advance deserve the sympathy and support of liberals. They are performing the same dangerous and disagreeable pioneer work on behalf of a humanized industry as the Wycliffites did on behalf of the Protestant Reformation or the unruly medieval communes did on behalf of political democracy.

Of course, like all engaged in a fight, they often borrow their weapons from their adversaries. But if they frequently use arrogant language or if they insist on conditions which restrict production or if they lack the ability wisely to employ the power which they are grasping, they are entitled to have their delinquency traced to its psychological and social cause. The situation of organized labor compels it to be aggressive, pugnacious and self-interested. Since the beginning of the labor movement the unions have never won a concession from their employers or from the state unless they possessed the power to extort it. Their masters have taught them the grim lesson of macht-politik—the importance of being irresistible rather than scrupulously

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

just. Organized labor seeks power more than anything else and it does not always use the power which it conquers with wise moderation. But inasmuch as it would not survive unless it did seek power, liberals should not allow this fact to deter them from lending support to the general aims and movement of labor. They should have the common sense to recognize the necessity in a civilization as callous as ours for a disfranchised class to force upon society its claim for greater social responsibility and consideration.

A socially enlightened government might have enabled the wage-earning worker to attain social equality, consideration and power by another route. It might have introduced a system of industrial and technical education which would have equipped the workers for positions of increased economic responsibility and social consideration. The unanswerable indictment against capitalism as an American institution is not that enterprising business men seized and exploited the opportunities and power which society placed at their disposal. It was natural and even necessary that they should organize production and distribution on a basis more profitable to themselves than to society. The offense against the American national welfare with which they are indictable is of a different kind. It is their blindness to the social penalties of their methods of hiring, firing and paying labor and their refusal to make the technical and social education of their employees a charge upon business or upon the business man's state. While boasting of their citizenship in a commonwealth which abolished class distinctions, they deprived the typical wage-earner of sufficient leisure, sufficient remuneration and sufficient sense of security in his job to enable him to assume a position of social responsibility and dignity. His status as a wage-earner interfered with, if it did not prevent, the kind of education which he needed to qualify him for citizenship in an equalitarian democracy. The most notorious and nauseating example of this capitalist irresponsibility is the spectacle of the Steel Corporation working over fifty per cent of its employees twelve hours a day or seven days a week and of denying them an American standard of living and then accusing them, when they strike, of conspiring to destroy the American Republic. A system which is capable of such hypocrisy is corrupt at the core.

Exploited by their employers and deserted by the state, the wage-earners had to educate themselves in the only way they knew how—that is, by fighting to obtain as a group the power and the independence which society denied to them as individuals. Such is the final significance of the trade-union movement and until the American national conscience adjusts its valuation of the movement to some such conception of its significance, a dangerous class cleavage will rend American society. The whole established tradition in American politics, jurisprudence and social consciousness is impervious to this interpretation and refuses to act upon it. The conservatives, being blind to the existence of class domination and to the accompanying miseducation of both master and servant, cannot and will not recognize the temporary need of class consciousness on the part of the worker as a means of overcoming his class minority. They insist that such class consciousness, no matter how tentative it may be, constitutes a betrayal of the national ideal. Yet in truth it is they who are betraying the national ideal. For their misinterpretation of the aims and necessities of organized labor and their blindness to the tendency of the wages system to deny to the industrial worker a position of individual independence and social dignity will, if it continues, prepare the way for a revolutionary class conflict.

It remains to be seen whether the American democracy can escape such a calamity by a wise prevision. It cannot escape by carrying on its recent policy of physical and moral intimidation, for that will accelerate rather than prevent the catastrophe. It cannot escape by welfare legislation, compulsory arbitration or any other expedient which ignores the need of the wage-earning workers for the independence and dignity which must come from substantial economic power and social responsibility. It can only escape by crediting to the organized workers a salutary social purpose which transcends class interests but which under the circumstances they cannot attain without class organization and consciousness. If this class organization and consciousness is treated by good middle-class Americans as disreputable and maleficent, it may develop in a manner dangerous to social order. On the other hand with anything like fair and intelligent treatment it will serve as a stage in the educational adjustment of the wage-earner to society. It will not mean in that event the subordination of the American commonwealth to class domination but rather its triumph over such domination through a gradual moral reconciliation among classes.

American progressives will remain divided into impotent factions and sects until they come to understand what an essential part progressivism must play in bringing about this adjustment. Organized labor cannot make the adjustment alone. If progressives do not interpret the movement as the march of a socially disfranchised class towards larger opportunities, it is likely to become blindly and destructively pugnacious and will tend more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and more to depend exclusively on direct action. But if American labor can obtain the candid, discriminating yet loyal support of a sufficiently numerous group of liberals who belong to other classes, the consciousness of being understood and the new inter-class association will undoubtedly ameliorate its frequently harsh, suspicious and aggressive attitude.

The progressives will testify to the possibility of creating a political democracy superior to class by themselves rising above class misunderstanding and prejudice. A large fraction of the English liberals have already assumed this attitude towards the labor movement. They have joined the Labor party and so created a fighting organization, which is the conscious political instrument of the social and industrial enfranchisement of the wage-earning and salaried worker. The American progressive is under a heavier obligation to adopt this course than the English liberal. For while the British Commonwealth has frankly recognized class discriminations, the complacent acceptance of such discriminations is peculiarly abhorrent to the American national consciousness.

That is the reason why as an American who called himself a reformer from 1890 to 1908, a Republican insurgent from 1908 to 1912, and since 1912 a progressive, and who shared most of the mistakes and illusions of the reformers, insurgents and progressives, I shall vote for the Farmer-Labor candidate for the Presidency. The Farmer-Labor party is an attempt to unite the American workers, whether industrial or agricultural, whether by hand or brain, whether salaried or wage-earning as a homogeneous group which is capable of exercising and deserves to exercise its share of economic, social and political power. It seeks to adjust the American labor movement both to the interests of the other classes and to its place in a humane commonwealth. A party which itself overcomes the class conflict is necessary to reconstruct a state which is capable of providing for the moral reconciliation of the classes.

The arguments against voting for the Farmer-Labor candidate are numerous and formidable. The chief of them is that the new party is far more of an aspiration than a reality. It has failed to secure the support of any large number of farmers and laborers. It does not represent either organized labor or the organized farmer. Instead of being supported by the American Federation of Labor, the leaders of that organization are its bitterest enemies. Its platform includes some things that I should like to see omitted and omits much that I should like to see included. In voting for Christensen I shall vote for a group of principles of which I do not wholly approve and for a platform which the existing party does not possess the administrative ability to carry into effect.

These serious drawbacks are traceable chiefly to one underlying cause. Practically all of the educational groundwork in public opinion for a Farmer-Labor party still remains to be done. Marxian Socialism has the advantage both of a definite creed and a Bible which focuses the convictions and emotions of its adherents. The British Labor party is built upon the experience of the British trades-union movement throughout three generations and upon over thirty years of the educational work of Sidney Webb and the other Fabians. The older parties in this country possess all the advantages of custom. Their tradition of seeking remedies for social maladies by means exclusively of direct governmental action is deeply rooted in the American political consciousness, and is taken for granted by the enormous majority of good American citizens. Nothing has happened to impair its authority. Thus the Farmer-Labor party is starting out to capture votes and become a political force in spite of the fact that only a small part of the American people is prepared to welcome and to understand its proposal to vindicate the deepest American social tradition of an equalitarian commonwealth by means not of disregarding but of recognizing and overcoming class dissensions. Before its formative idea can become politically effective it will need not only a more thorough, a more lucid and a more persuasive presentation than it has yet received but a radical change of mental attitudes on the part of all the groups which the party seeks to unite—of organized labor, of the farmers and of the progressive members of other classes. This change of attitude can hardly take place except as the result of supplementing the political coalition of the groups by an association among them for economic cooperation as consumers.

Those who cast a vote for the Farmer-Labor candidates should not cherish illusions about the ability of the party to win easy and numerous future converts. Much as the new party needs votes, it needs even more than votes a candid understanding of the gulf which separates the formative idea upon which the party is built from the actual state of mind of the farmers, laborers and liberals whose cooperation is necessary to make it practically effective. That gulf is wide and deep—as wide and deep as the class cleavage which the party recognizes and proposes to overcome. In this sense a vote for Christensen becomes pale with an unreality similar to the unreality which afflicts every attempt in this abominable election to give effective political

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

expression to the aspirations of a progressive to make his vote count on behalf of human liberation. But there is one merit in such a vote which to my mind is decisive in its favor. Plain as is the political unreality to which the lack of antecedent preparation condemns the Farmer-Labor party as an expression of liberal aspiration, the party is born of a sound application of the traditional American ideal of a homogeneous equalitarian democracy to the existing facts of American economic and social life. It looks like the best way in 1920 of vindicating American nationality as an expression of an essentially ethical and humane ideal. I am thankful, consequently, to those people who have unfurled the new party flag and afforded me an opportunity of saluting it. Although it floats over a castle in the air, it does not call for blood as does the red flag of socialism and it means more of the good which good Americans have meant by the Stars and Stripes than do the besmeared, tawdry and drooping flags of the Democratic and Republican parties. To vote for it is only an expression of faith, but it is an expression of faith at a moment when in my opinion the old parties afford the voter no opportunity of using his vote as an expression of humane power.

HERBERT CROLY.

The Friendship that Failed

ON his front porch this sunny Sunday morning, sits William E. Markley with clenched teeth reading his paper alone. Ordinarily I should be there with him. But this morning I am alone on my front porch reading my paper. Things have changed, worse the luck.

For forty years Markley and I have sat on each other's porches in pleasant accord. We have exchanged ideas as we have exchanged help at haying. In politics as in threshing Markley and I have been wellnigh indispensable to each other. But all that was before the 1920 campaign. This Sunday morning the chores are done and visiting time has come, but we sit on our respective porches alone.

Let it not be supposed that Markley and I were political peas in a pod. The truth is, we were born political foes. Markley was baptized a Democrat. My sainted father was a Republican. I will say for Markley, and I claim the same for myself, that he was true to his inherited allegiance. There never was a more conscientious Democrat than Markley. He is, or till this summer was, the most reasonable man I ever knew. Yet I was not free in his presence to speak slightingly of the party of Jefferson and Jackson. Markley will tell you, or would have told you a little while ago, that I, too, am a reasonable man. Yet he knew better than to lacerate my party susceptibilities.

But goodness me, that made no difference to us as reasonable, honest-minded men. The mutual consideration which this required was actually a help to our good relations. Having come to a perfect understanding as to each other's political holy of holies, we were the more able to discuss political matters with the perfect sincerity and and frankness and logic which become sovereign American citizens. Of course we did not always see matters the same. Occasionally, though not often, we voted differently. Living face to face, as we did, growing the same crops, wearing the same brand of overalls and driving the same model of Ford, our minds would tend to run together on matters of interest to us. But temperaments differ, and the year when he as a true progressive Democrat gave his support to the Roosevelt electors, I felt it my duty, as an Abraham Lincoln Republican, to dissent with the populists. But we enjoyed and respected each other none the less for that.

We differed somewhat on the tariff. We agreed, of course, that the tariffs voted by Congress on the wheat and meat, which he raised and sold on the European market, was a species of bait for less literate fish than we confessed to being. I, however, as a member of the historic party of protection, was inclined to thorough-going free trade. With the help of Adam Smith I used to press him hard on that line. But Markley, faithful Democrat as he was, held that some little protection for the more infantile of our industries was still desirable. While we both voted for Grover Cleveland on the tariff issue of 1888, he as a true Democrat, and I as a loyal Republican, there was always that difference between us. But pshaw! We didn't mind that.

My farm was clear of debt and I had money in the bank in '96. He, with his large family to support, was mortgaged, and no one owed him a cent. We came near to friction over free silver that year. As a member of the party which freed the slaves, I felt that I should be for the under-dog. Money was going up, making it hard for folks like Markley who were in debt. I felt like joining Mr. Bryan in trying to cheapen it a bit.

Markley argued with me that two wrongs would not make a right. It would be as hard, he said, for the laboring man to get his wages raised in keeping with a cheapened dollar as it would be for him to pay his mortgage with forty-cent wheat. There we stuck for a while. We spent a week be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tween wheat sowing and corn husking talking it over. Finally we found a way out. He as a life-long Democrat would vote for McKinley and sound money. I as an emancipation Republican would vote for Bryan and the burdened debtor. It was the same as if we had stayed at home, but we had done our citizen's duty by voting the wisest we knew.

From 1896 on, Markley and I moved down the lane of life harmonious as two birds in a nest. When Mr. Taft ran for the purpose of carrying out the Roosevelt policies and, as it later developed, burying them, our two noses functioned prophetically as one. The election of 1912 furnished, perhaps, the best example of the brotherly accord which lighted Markley's steps and mine. It was a painful situation for me. I could not bring myself to speak as we sat on Markley's porch that June afternoon looking over our Sunday papers. He broke the silence for me, finally, in a voice which was so very sympathetic that I could have wept.

"I know," he said, "what your political ambition has been. It has been, as a true and loyal Republican, to have a chance to vote the Republican ticket once more before you die. Now you find yourself forced once more to vote for a Democrat. You will be unwilling by your vote to help the one dear half of your party destroy the other dear half. But be comforted; remember the rule you and I have always followed, that, even as the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth, so our devotion to our parties may be measured by the number of our votes against them, no less than by the number for them."

I was comforted then, and our friendship ran on like an Indian summer day through 1912 and then 1916. Our minds so merged that ever as before he chastened while I rewarded, and I rewarded while he chastened. And so it came to this dark year of 1920. Now we sit, each on his own porch, each reading his own paper, and the frost lies on our hearts. After forty years of the sweetest reasonableness I ever saw in any man, Markley has become a blind partisan. There is no getting along with him.

When Harding was nominated we did not say much. I could see he felt sorry for me, but all he said was, "There's plenty of time." We were absorbed just then in getting the new cooperative farmers' store started and politics was not much on our minds. But when, early in the morning, the news came of the nomination of Cox, I hurried over to see whether I could give him first aid.

Markley was in the yard hitching up to go to the wheatfield. He had heard the news over the 'phone. His face, as he turned toward me, had a look I had never seen there before. It was the stiff mouthed look of a man who has made up his mind and who doesn't intend to change, though all the facts in the universe tumble about his ears.

"I am a Democrat," was all he said, "and I am for Harding, of course."

I suppose I looked my disappointment, for he added, "It won't do any good to discuss it. As a Democrat I have got to vote for Harding, and that's the end of it." He slapped his horses over the back with the lines and left me.

For two months now I have been pleading with that man on bended knees. To me the case was from the first perfectly clear. As a faithful Republican there was nothing for me to do but to vote for Cox. Vote to make my party responsible for a President who doesn't know whether it's himself or Reed Smoot or Will Hays who is to be President. I love my party too fondly for that.

When I said that to Markley, he hurt my feelings for the first time in his life. He accused me of partisanship. He had finally consented to explain further why he, as a Democrat, was so unreasonably and fanatically bent on voting for Harding.

"You know as well as I do," he said, "that whichever of these mediocrities is elected, sewed up as they are, we are in for four years of misery. Whichever party wins with the gang now behind it is going to get the damnedest licking in 1924"—I have seen Markley stalled in a mudhole and no chains, but had never before heard him swear—"that any party ever had. I am a Democrat. Do you suppose I want it to be my party that makes that fizzle and draws down the licking? Indeed not. I'm for Harding."

"It's selfish of you," I said. "I never saw such narrow partisanship."

"What of yourself?" he snapped. "Haven't you just said you love your party too much to want it to elect a jellyfish for President? You propose to put your old Republican party above your country and vote for Cox. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

He was getting red in the face, so I went home sick of soul, and am there still. This morning I look across the road at Markley sitting on his porch alone with his teeth set, and I think how partisanship has at last parted my old friend and me, and I wish I could chase the whole herd of politicians down a steep place into the sea.

WALTER LOCKE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Farmer-Labor: The Project

THE Farmer-Labor party starts frankly with the thought of man as worker. It does not order the execution of man as owner. It simply agrees with Lincoln that "Labor" is prior to "Capital."

It does not regard Lincoln as a European agitator. The first plank in its platform is "one hundred per cent Americanism." It does not mean the Americanism of those people who finance Americanism as a means by which they hope to frustrate Lincoln. It means the Americanism which without any financing sprang up on all those frontier farms on which man as owner was nothing unless he first and last and all the time was also man as worker.

The Farmer-Labor party admits the manifest existing truth that man can be both owner and worker. It does not rouse workers against owners, but the function of work against the function of ownership is a struggle to give the function of work its rightful prior place.

Its logically rightful title is simply the Labor party. It inserts the word Farmer only for fear that otherwise some farmers might fancy themselves excluded. It might with equal propriety insert the word accountant and the word engineer. It might also with the strictest regard for its principles insert the words"higher executive official." Nothing would please it more than to give a little dinner to welcome to its ranks the president of the United Steel Corporation.

We believe that there is more happiness in the creative impulse and in the cooperative impulse than in the possessive impulse and in the impulse of authority and dominion. When we lay it down that Labor must be admitted to share in the management of industry, and when we say that its share in that management must be an increasing share, and when we set no limit to the extent to which it may increase, we do not think that we are harming anybody. We think that we are benefiting everybody, or at least trying to do so, and trying with a spirit, with a final purpose which I for one am not ashamed to say that I justify principally out of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ when he said:

"Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them and they that are great exercise authority upon them: but it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant."

In our view the persons who need emancipation are not simply the persons who are commonly called workers, but also equally the persons who are obliged to exercise the leadership of the workers through an authority and a dominion drawn solely from the personal possessors of the plant on which the workers work. Are those persons, are those personal possessors, now happy? They know they are not. Their faces confess that they are not. They are harried by fear. To keep their present sort of power they are driven to unending cruelties like Palmer's treatment of deportees, and to unending absurdities like Mr. Sweet's expulsion of duly elected legislators. Their consternation at once reveals their inward uneasiness. I notice calm peace nowadays only on two sorts of faces: faces set toward a religion which contemns personal possessions and which tames the possessive impulse in the individual heart, and faces set toward a society in which the possessive impulse will be subordinated by external institutions to the impulses of creative and cooperative work present in every man and released by the triumph of man as worker.

The Farmer-Labor party aims at peace, not war. Yet it definitely begins its agitation more in certain social groups than in certain other social groups—among miners, for instance, more than among bankers. It does so because it has to. It has to begin with those human beings who most realize that they are workers. It hopes to build up among them a philosophy and a missionary philosophy of the function and destiny on earth of man as worker.

In the convention of the Farmer-Labor party at Chicago one of the most active and respected delegates was a banker. He is as devoted to the principles of the party as any blast furnace tender could be. Perhaps he will convert some of his fellow bankers. But the Farmer-Labor party realizes that it will probably convert fifty-one per cent of the blast furnace tenders quite some time before it converts fifty-one per cent of the bankers. To that extent it resigns itself to being a class party. It consoles itself by reflecting that it is also, as the Republican party is not, and as the Democratic party is not, an anti-class party.

The Republican party and the Democratic party are earnest accomplices in the steady perpetuation of the divisions between classes. They stand for keeping Capital the legal insider in industry and Labor the legal outsider. The Farmer-Labor party aims to break down that barrier. It aims to take Labor into the inside of industry and to set it by legal right at the same table of management with Capital. It aims to diminish the separation of the two classes by diminishing the present separation between their functions and therefore between their psychologies.

It backs man as worker to be the solvent of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that war and it backs him even in those industries which may be owned by the state. The Farmer-Labor party is not a government ownership and operation party. For certain industries it favors government ownership, but it thereupon in those industries favors democratic operation. In the mind of the party the Plumb plan is an illustration of democratic operation. The Farmer-Labor party has no ambition to supplant the autocratic agents of private capital by the autocratic agents of colossal irresistible nationalized capital. In publicly owned industries as in privately owned industries its central principle is an increasing share for all actual workers in the responsibilities of management.

It especially favors government ownership—or some sort of other public ownership—for public utilities and natural resources. It favors it also in many of those instrumentalities of commerce which together constitute the route between the farmer and the consumer. It regards that route as in truth a sort of public highway and it thinks that many private toll gates should be removed from it.

It observes that its members among owners of farms are not inclined toward class hostilities against laborers on farms. Those owners, whether they themselves are workers on their farms or not, are men in whom the idea of the central importance of man as worker is present. They accordingly at the convention of the Farmer-Labor party at Chicago were not merely allies but thoroughly colleagues and comrades. They were as favorable as any trade unionist to the democratic operation of publicly owned industries and to the representation of all workers in management in all industries. They realized indeed that in order to open and clear the route from farmer to consumer the farmers need the help of the trade unions. But they realized also in fact something immensely more. They realized that just as production on a farm is likely to be at its best when the man working it is also the owner of it, so production in any industry is likely to come to its best when the workers in it through a participation in management acquire the temperament of both the working man and the owning man. Here again, in the relations between the producers of farm products and the producers of industrial products the Farmer-Labor party believes its philosophy to be a reconciliation and not on estrangement.

But the Farmer-Labor party perhaps cannot say that it has a total philosophy. At any rate it cannot say that it has a philosophy of which it sees the end. It follows up its demand for Labor's share in management by an immediately next sentence in which it says that this principle should be developed through the lessons learned in the course of its application. The Farmer-Labor party starts with a certain definite thought and proceeds in a certain definite direction, but proceeds in that direction at an experimental pace. It feels certain only that man as owner must relinquish his legal right to sole management of industrial property. It feels certain that he must relinquish it whether his ownership is through a private corporation or through a public governmental corporation. In either case it asks that owners be obliged definitely to share their powers of control. It does not ask that their powers of control be extinguished.

It knows that if the owners continue in their present courses they will themselves bring about a collapse of industry the rebuilding of which will then naturally not be committed to their hands. The Farmer-Labor party aspires—as indeed the Socialist party also aspires—to prevent that collapse. The Socialist party has a philosophy of a new order entire. The Farmer-Labor party has a philosophy simply of a principle to be the growing point of a new order. The Farmer-Labor party wants to plant that principle in the existing order and then let it grow into whatever new order may be developed through the ensuing relations between an ownership shorn of autocracy and working staffs raised to responsibility.

That is its project. It follows necessarily that the Farmer-Labor party is without reservations in favor of full civil liberties at home and of full national liberties everywhere abroad. It does not ask Great Britain to get out of Ireland without asking the United States to get out of Haiti. It is suspicious of a League of Nations which does not seem to inspire its members to get out of the territories of other nations. It does not believe that any League of Nations can stop wars, as long as the dominant psychology of nations gives a priority to man as owner over man as worker and follows man as owner and as investor and as foreign investor into forever new imperialisms amidst forever new quarrels of rivalry in ownership and jealousy in greatness of dominion.

Against those manifestly unchristian and vulgar ideals, against the bloody beckonings of the possessive sense abroad and against the growing savagery of the possessive sense at home, the Farmer-Labor party raises the ideal of institutions increasingly penetrated by man the worker, man the producer, man not living by dominion of personal possessions over other men, but by cooperation with them in a common creative endeavor on an equality of personality. That equality before the altar is religion. That equality in the world is peace. So I see it.

WILLIAM HARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

After the Play

IT is not extraordinary that Bernard Shaw should give Heartbreak House to the Theatre Guild for its approaching American production. The Theatre Guild has shown what can be done when sound intelligence is devoted to theatrical production, and it has earned the kind of preference that Shaw has given it. The two Ervine plays are the finest feathers in the cap of the Theatre Guild, Inc. Both John Ferguson and Jane Clegg were produced in Europe without making the slightest impression. The New York performances showed what could be done with the very same material. They were splendid performances. They lifted the two plays into high conspicuousness, and held them there until their fortune was made. This kind of success took a combination of discernments in play-choosing and actor-selecting and scenic art and play production which everyone knows to be rare and valuable. And there was nothing finicky about these triumphs of the Theatre Guild. They were broad, popular triumphs.

I doubt if the newest production by the Theatre Guild, David Pinski's comedy The Treasure, has got the stuff of which such triumphs are made. It does not need Mr. Pinski's letter reprinted in the program to show that the play inspires great expectations in the author, Professor George P. Baker, Mr. Reicher who produces it, and others. The very fact that the Theatre Guild has put it on the stage is sufficient warrant that the enterprise is artistically serious. But while this fact is almost enough to make one ready to perjure oneself, and while David Pinski is just the kind of creator whom America should support and encourage, The Treasure is a comedy that seems to me psychologically deficient, and on this account I do not believe it will succeed.

The Treasure is a Jewish comedy translated from the Yiddish by Ludwig Lewisohn. Its scene is, I suppose, Slavonic Jewry. The household is that of Chone, an elderly grave-digger, who has two children, Judke a male youth and Tille a female youth. Tille is not so much a person as a type of succulent young femininity. She is not a personality perceived and penetrated but an exemplar of the great sexual platitude, an animal looking for a mate and not too delicate about it, eager to adorn herself and swimming in an ocean of day-dreams. Opposed to this embodied instinct is the ritualistic Jewish mother, also a type. She reads the Lamentations while her daughter sits in the window and dreams of courtship—a window from which the young girl sees only mourners and funerals and death-in-life.

The catalytic agent in this play is the treasure. It is an actual or rather hypothetical treasure discovered by Judke, the half-witted son. It appears that Judke has gone out to bury his dog and in digging the grave has upturned a "treasure," the first fruits of which he yields to his sister —a handful of gold imperials. The idiot boy cannot tell, or will not tell, where the rest of the treasure is. The mother shrieks at him and the father roars at him but the idiot can only whimper and chortle unintelligibly, and meanwhile the sister grabs for herself the first handful of imperials and fends off her greedy father with the bribe of a few actual coins.

The comedy of greed is thus launched in the grave-digger's family. The daughter extends it immediately by rushing to realize her own desires. She wants pretty clothes so that she can have handsome suitors. She spreads the news of the "treasure" all through the city; she comes home in lovely raiment, prancing with pride. Before her father or her mother can adjust themselves to their dazzling daughter, the community begins to beat a track to the grave-digger's hut, all excited about the "treasure." The hard cash squandered by the daughter has had an instantaneous and amazing effect.

Granted a certain pleasure in the situation thus created by the young woman, the performances of the community can hardly fail to be amusing. The marriage broker is only the most obvious comedic figure. Besides this gentleman subservient to the "treasure," there come the sonorous president of the community, the solicitous members of the society for providing dowries for poor maidens, the acquisitive members of the society for the care of the sick. And of course there arrive the lawyer to dispute the title to the "treasure," and the owner of the land on which the great fortune was found who joins with the president of the community in asserting his claim to a portion of the estate. These worshippers of the golden calf are portrayed with broad humor by Mr. Pinski. He sets them off against the poor bewildered grave-digger who lies in bed protesting his ignorance, with the idiot-boy laughing immoderately in the background like a sardonic chorus of the gods.

When the grave-digger convinces his greedy neighbors that he knows no more than they do as to the whereabouts of the treasure, the allurement of the fortune really begins. Judke cannot lead them to it, but it seems fairly certain that he was burying his dog in the graveyard, and late at night the entire community goes out to the graveyard to search for this hidden gold. Pinski makes the idiot the agent of his harshest satire in this last riot in the graveyard, which is most picturesquely staged. The heads of the community first promise to restore Chone as grave-digger in spite of the appointment of his successor. This trivial injustice is nothing to the antics which these heads of the community perform under the jeering direction of the idiot. At last, after the bourgeoisie has completely debased itself to earn the "treasure," the "treasure" is revealed in a corner of the graveyard—four additional imperials.

It is a crushing joke, but, as I see it, too crushing. A community so completely deluded as this of Pinski's passes out of the social region of comedy into the barbarian region of farce. To hear corrective laughter from the half-witted is, if you like, bitterly humorous. The only sane man in this comedy is the satiric booby. But when the joke has been thoroughly exploited it is, in the end, a joke.

Self-interest in human nature is not so crassly exercised, is more personal and differentiated, than this broadside suggests. I cannot help feeling that Pinski's perception is too intellectualized, too inflexible, too hard, too gritty. The essence of comedy is eager psychological discriminativeness, a discriminativeness of which The Treasure gives no signs. Had the acting of Tille been less strident, the feeling of human variety might have been greater. But the stridency of all the acting except Mr. Digges' pressed the edge of The Treasure too hard on my imagination. Does Pinski really mistake this extra-crude cynicism for comedic candor? It is roughly effective as a jest but it isn't the vision that touches the core of human nature. And as for its special Jewish flavor, its trueness to the Ghetto, I can only take that on faith—a faith which, by the hackneyed low-comedy German accent of some of the actors, is unpleasantly disturbed.

F. H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As a Wise Man Sees Us

Character and Opinion in the United States, by George Santayana. New York: Scribners.

BY the usual criteria, America may justly claim Professor Santayana as her own. Through forty years, with some intervals, he lived among us—and have we ever needed a tenth of forty years to put the stamp of Americanism on a man? Yet Santayana has remained to this day alien as he was when he first touched American soil. The first requirement upon those who would be Americans is a renunciation of loyalties, and Santayana's loyalties were directed to a system of culture too precious for renunciation, and besides, essentially a part of his existence. And so he writes of America as one of the long line of distinguished foreign observers who have helped us to understand ourselves. Character and Opinion, he tells us is composed for the most part of lectures originally addressed to British audiences. Those audiences were no doubt illuminated, but there is far greater profit in them for the American reader. A clearer-sighted or wiser observer never wrote about America.

Nor has any observer written of America with greater friendliness and sympathy. There is in America, he writes, "much forgetfulness, much callow disrespect for what is past or alien; but there is a fund of vigor, goodness and hope such as no nation ever possessed before." "It is a fearless people, and free from malice, as you might see in their eyes and gestures, even if their conduct did not prove it." "If it were given me to look into the depths of a man's heart, and I did not find goodwill at the bottom I should say without hesitation, You are not an American." That is a measure of praise sufficient to make even the chauvinistic reader accept with good grace the author's adverse judgments, which penetrate equally to the heart of our national character, although they are expressed in terms so urbane and kindly that they seem at first glance hardly to touch us. We are young, very young, and there is much that is rather childish and innocent about us. So our delight in mere bigness. That is not really materialism. "It is the fisherman's joy in a big haul, the good uses of which he can take for granted." Our optimism, kindness and goodwill run the risk of growing into a habit of doting on everything. The good American is rather overfreighted with subjects that are sacred. And "trite and rigid bits of morality and religion, with much seemly and antique political lore, remain axiomatic in the American, as in the mind of a child; he may carry all this about with an unquestioning familiarity which does not comport understanding." We are possessed of an admirable devotion to liberty—or rather "English liberty" —but "there is no country which lives under more overpowering compulsions. . . . Even what is best in American life is compulsory—the idealism, the zeal, the beautiful happy unison of its great moments. You must wave, you must cheer, you must push with the irresistible crowd; otherwise you will feel like a traitor, a soulless outcast, a deserted ship high and dry on the shore." "America is all one prairie, swept by an universal tornado."

We are free in our daily lives, so long as we observe the prohibitions and yield obedience to the compulsions of our democracy. But in the domain of the intellect have we not a less confined freedom, we who have cast out authority and buried the past? No; democratic optimism has set up its organs of constraint also in this domain. It is nothing new that the dice of thought should be loaded; that has been true ever since the time of the Greeks. It is not alone in America that "in conservative schools the student learned and tried to fathom the received solutions; in liberal schools he was perhaps invited to seek solutions of his own, but still to the old questions." But it is hardly possible to reject Santayana's implication that in America freedom of inquiry has been even more provisional than elsewhere. Philosophy with us remained almost completely subordinate to theology until recently. There was something free in the Transcendentalist epoch, but that "was all a harvest of leaves; these worthies had an expurgated and barren conception of life." And even the great period of the Harvard School of Philosophy, when Santayana worked beside Royce and James and the rest to awaken America to the worth of philosophy—was it really more than a harvest of leaves, however rich and gorgeous? Santayana's reader will undoubtedly find it difficult to assure himself that the fruits were substantial.

The dice were loaded against free speculation, by the very fact that the philosophers were grouped in a university. Such a position is favorable to philosophy when "it is expected to be a reasoned defense of some funded inspiration." That was not the conscious expectation of Harvard. "But corporate bodies are like persons, long vaguely swayed by early impressions they may have forgotten." And Harvard had been founded to rear Puritan divines. The position of the University in the community made the philosophers' sense of social responsibility acute. "They were invited to be at once genuine philosophers and popular professors." They were bound "by two different responsibilities, that of describing things as they are, and that of finding them propitious to certain preconceived human desires." They had to observe the prohibitions and yield to the compulsions of the existing American scheme of life, not because of any definable external requirement but because they were Americans, subject to the principles of their nation and the rules implicit in their moral function.

Could that have been true of a spirit so frank and brave as that of William James, of a spirit so bold and challenging as that of Royce? Essentially, it was, as Santayana shows quite clearly in two of his most remarkable chapters: "James fell in with the hortatory tradition of college sages; he turned his psychology, whenever he could do so honestly, to purposes of edification; and his little sermons on habit, on will, on faith, and this on the latent capacities of men, were fine and stirring and just the sermons to preach to the young Christian soldiers. . . . He seems to have felt sure that certain thoughts and hopes—those familiar to a liberal Protestantism—were every man's true friends in life." Always a little bias, and in favor of the good life as conceived by democratic America. As for Royce "he passed for an eminent logician, because he was dialectical and fearless in argument and delighted in the play of formal relations . . . but all this show of logic was but a screen for his heart, and in his heart there was no clearness." He could invent a new proof of the existence of God, but he could not wring himself free from the necessity of reconciling Protestant morality with his metaphysical religion.

I do not pretend to do justice to Santayana's essays on James and Royce; neither do I think that he does them full justice. There was vastly more in them than would seem to comport with such contradictions at the heart of their thinking. In another connection Santayana remarks

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that "Comparison is the expedient of those who can not reach the heart of the things compared. . . . In reality, at the centre of every natural being there is something individual and incommensurable." Neither does critical analysis reach the individual and incommensurable that make up the central reality of figures like James and Royce. But granting this does not weaken Santayana's central position. Americans, from the day laborer to the philosopher, are pretty thoroughly permeated and controlled by common conventions and values which are in turn derived from a conception of the good life satisfying to a nation that is immature.

But what of the future? In the realm of philosophy, a new school is coming up which does not share the moral preconceptions of Puritan New England, and responds the more harmoniously to the characteristic American spirit. It is nearer to the democracy and farther from the cultural tradition of the ages. But the American spirit itself —is that a permanency? Santayana does not risk prophecy, unless prophecy may be inferred from his final and most brilliant chapter on English liberty.

English liberty is a unique possession of England and America, something not at all to be confused with the absolute liberty for which the Greeks died at Thermopylae and martyrs untold have suffered since. English liberty is the spirit of live and let live, its essence is free cooperation. It rests on the assumptions that at bottom all have the same interests, and that each has a plastic nature that can accommodate itself to the will of the rest. In the spirit of English liberty, the minority yields gracefully to the majority, and the majority has no inclination to fix conditions under which the minority can not live.

Two conditions are essential to the practice of English liberty, a plastic, groping habit of mind, and an environment in which there is a fair approach to equality and a community of vital interests. Anglo-Saxondom, according to Santayana, has the proper habit of mind. Widely diffused private property meets the environmental requirement. So long as neither party striving for power threatens the vital interest of property, the property owner will take defeat at the polls with equanimity. But suppose that a powerful party set out to abolish property? The fight against it would not wear the aspect of a political settlement under conditions of English liberty. And according to Santayana's view, if the attack on property succeeded, English liberty would be gone forever. Not that he despairs, for though civilization perish, still the earth can not lose its youth and that is what chiefly matters.

Yet English liberty, as Santayana paints it, is a thing too excellent to destroy without regret. It may indeed be shallow and commonplace. Great emotions do not rise under it. It does not inspire art nor deeds of magnificence. But it fosters mutual aid, and love, and the frankness and generosity that make America great. Santayana, it will be seen, idealizes English liberty, at least as it reveals itself in America. He is a poet of light, with no eye for such smudges as Ku Klux, the Bloody Shirt, Judge Lynch; tar and feathers, bull pens, Palmer and Burleson. Qualified as any judgment of English liberty must be, it was an excellent thing. But its fundamental conditions recede farther from fulfillment, day by day. The America of Santayana's ideal is receding with it, to be succeeded by a better, if Americans have the courage and good will Santayana grants them.

ALVIN JOHNSON.

The Island of Sheep

The Island of Sheep, by Cadmus and Harmonia. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

RECIPE: Take a Highland landowner, a Scotch minister, a journalist of the Nation sort, a conservative, a liberal lawyer, the wife of a liberal ex-minister, a labor-leader or two, an imperialist, a parliamentary tactician, a French general, a captain of industry, an American politician, an American lady resident in England, a sweet young English girl for sentiment, and a few miscellaneous men and women for audience and chorus; mix all these into a house-party at a country-house on an island off the Scotch coast; set them to discuss over their meals, and in their comings and goings, every controversial topic from democracy to the League of Nations, from the morals of the liberal party to the incurable idealism of the English, from Ireland to President Wilson, from the aims of labor to the religiosity of America; season with some shrewd comments on men and affairs (such as "liberty is too precious a thing for fools to paw")—and you have the ingredients for a political dialogue which will agreeably entertain, and even instruct you on a hot summer afternoon.

If you pride yourself on your inside acquaintance with British politics, you can add to your pleasure by guessing at the originals of the various characters and at the identity of "Cadmus and Harmonia." As a matter of fact, characterization is the authors' weakest point. Their style is too fluent, too uniform. Opinions are well contrasted, but the individualities of the speakers are lost in the monotony, in the rhythm and vocabulary of their utterance. The authors' skill, in this respect, does not go much beyond making a labor-leader drop his h's. Two of the ladies are described as "libertines in speech," but the most blameless curate might listen to them without blushing.

The only characters which stand out with any individuality are the two labor leaders and the Scotch minister who, having been a fighting chaplain in the war, has returned to his scholarship, his fishing, and his preaching. It is not hard to see that these three are the mouthpieces of the authors' own views.

The conversation among the members of the party is a fair sample of the cross-currents of political thought in Great Britain after the war. The main theme, to which the talk returns from every digression into religion, imperialism, political principles (or the lack of them), is always labor: its attitude, its aspirations, its future. The methods of its leaders are freely criticized. "I'd be for the Labor party tomorrow if it would buck up and reform its stable. It isn't the horses that's to blame; it's the poor stamp of jock," remarks one of the characters. But the other side of the picture is not forgotten: the fact that, like everyone else, labor is groping its way to a clear understanding of its own views and of the means for their realization; that its demand for industrial self-government and a fuller share in the best life is fundamentally just; that anger, ignorance, suspicion make men hard to lead along a path of wisdom and moderation. Not unfittingly, one of the labor leaders is made to remark that, "The only hope for democracy is to make it an aristocracy," which comes on the top of the minister's declaration that "democracy is the most brittle thing and can be maintained only by constant watchfulness and sacrifice." And this is the note on which the dialogue ends: "I ask for the workers something far bigger than ordinary wages and power.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A NEW World You Have Never Seen!

Are You Out of Touch With the New World of Today? Are You Keeping Pace With the World's Affairs? Read Here About a Wonderful New Idea--and How It Serves You!

Have you seen the world as it looks today? The old world no longer exists—vast changes have taken place in every quarter of the globe. Today we are living in a NEW world!

The greatest war in history, and the Peace Treaty, and its resultant tremendous social, economic and other changes, have practically turned the whole world upside down. They have wiped out our former maps—altered the face of continents, changed the status of territories everywhere—upset the entire world situation.

Besides these forces, there have been other epoch-making forces at work revising the map of the world. Recent explorations, unprecedented expansions in commence and industry, political upheavals—all have left their marks in every part of the globe.

Do you know what has been added to our geographical knowledge of the world by the explorations of Stefansson, Stuck, and McMillan in the Arctic, of Smuts in Africa, of Rondo in Brazil?

Do you know how commerce has opened new routes of communication, built great new railroads in Alaska, Australia, Africa, Asia, South America?

Do you know how many new industrial cities have sprung up in the United States?

Do you know the new Europe that has come out of the war—with all the changes in boundaries, the new nations that have been born, the internationalized cities, the territories that are under plebiscites?

And now, through a wonderful New Kind of Atlas, has come to you the opportunity to keep pace with the world's changes.

A Wonderful New Kind of Atlas

IF the world never changed, no atlas would ever grow out-of-date. But with the rapid march of current events even new atlases must soon become obsolete. The NEW WORLD Loose-Leaf Atlas is the only atlas that keeps pace with the world, because we made it—

Loose-Leaf!

The New World Loose-Leaf Atlas represents a distinct advance in the science of atlas production. Never before has an atlas been made that could be kept up-to-date. Never before has the loose-leaf principle been applied to an atlas.

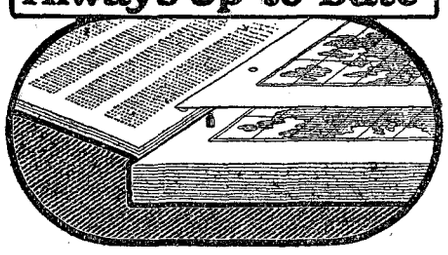
It is the only method by which atlases can be kept permanently abreast of developments, of changes political and economic, of advances in commerce, of new discoveries and explorations.

Keep Pace With the World

The NEW WORLD Loose-Leaf ATLAS brings you a wealth of new information about every place in the world—it shows in detail every country of the earth—every political division. And in addition it gives a vast fund of interesting facts dealing with such features as climate, vegetation, natural resources, trade routes, races, population, history. Here are four hundred big pages of maps (13¼ inches by 19½ inches) and index, four hundred pages of timely, authentic, comprehensive knowledge about the world of today.

You need this wonderful new kind of Atlas now—to keep in touch with the big world issues—to understand international affairs, to read your newspaper intelligently—to carry on conversation with well-informed people. You need it to broaden your business outlook—to follow the course of trade at home and abroad. Children need it to visualize history and the great war—to learn about the *new* world of today. And you will need this Atlas in the future to keep you informed of the world changes everywhere which will be recorded by the Up-to-Date Map Service.

Always Up-to-Date



Map Service Free For Two Years

For every change that is made, a new map will be furnished, and for two years we will furnish these maps without charge.

Twice yearly, as the publishers have made new maps to conform to new conditions, they will be sent to those who own the New World Loose-Leaf Atlas. All that is necessary to bring the atlas up-to-date is to put the new maps in the binder. Think what this will mean to you! As Mr. O. P. Austin, Statistician of the National City Bank of New York, says, "Seldom a day passes that I do not use this Atlas in my office work, and these particular (new) maps I have found very useful, and must have them to keep the copy which is in my office down to date. I am a great believer in the 'Loose-Leaf' system."

After the first two-year period New World Loose-Leaf Atlas owners can purchase this always up-to-date map service for a very nominal sum, thus insuring permanence to their atlas.

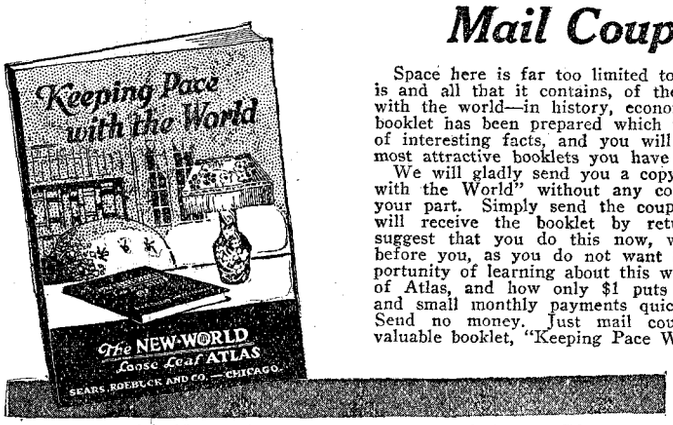
Here is the atlas you have been waiting for—the atlas that shows the new order that has been reconstructed out of the chaos of war. You need no longer be without an up-to-date atlas, and you need not wait until additional settlements have been made in the map, for this big New Kind of Atlas keeps pace with the world—shows changes in the map whenever and wherever they occur.

A Permanent Investment in Kowledge

You will never have to throw this atlas away. It can always be kept up-to-date. It keeps you constantly informed of what is going on in the world. It enables you to interpret current events—it gives you a timely grasp of the national and international issues of the day—it enables you to talk intelligently about the present situation in foreign lands.

No home should be without the NEW WORLD Loose-Leaf ATLAS—it is a wonderful help to every one who wants to keep informed of what is going on in the world. Let us tell you ALL about this wonderful, large-sized Atlas.

Mail Coupon for Interesting Booklet



Space here is far too limited to give an adequate idea of what the NEW WORLD Loose-Leaf ATLAS is and all that it contains, of the valuable, special features it offers to every-one wishing to keep pace with the world—in history, economics, business and trade and international expansion. But a handsome booklet has been prepared which tells the whole fascinating story. It is profusely illustrated and is full of interesting facts, and you will find it one of the most attractive booklets you have ever seen or read.

We will gladly send you a copy of "Keeping Pace with the World" without any cost or obligation on your part. Simply send the coupon below, and you will receive the booklet by return mail. Let us suggest that you do this now, while the matter is before you, as you do not want to overlook the opportunity of learning about this wonderful New Kind of Atlas, and how only $1 puts it into your home and small monthly payments quickly make it yours. Send no money. Just mail coupon *now* for this valuable booklet, "Keeping Pace With the World."

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO., Dept. 21TA Chicago, Ill.

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO.
Dept. 21TA **Chicago, Ill.**

Kindly send me, without cost or obligation on my part, the new booklet, "Keeping Pace with the World."

Name .....

Address .....

Town .....

State .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I want them to have the wages of the spirit and power over their own souls. . . . There's only one key to all our problems today, and that is to give the workers the same treasures of knowledge that hitherto have belonged only to the few. Then you will make our democracy safe for the world, for you will have made it an aristocracy. . . . I tell you that I have known poor men who spent their evenings with Plato and their scanty holidays with the great poets. There's a thirst abroad, a divine thirst, and the quenching of it is the finest task before us. Give the worker all the technical training he wants, but don't deny him the humanities, for without them he can never be a citizen. . . . Think of what you can make of him. Not culture in the trashy sense, but the wise mind and the keen spirit. He lives close to reality, so you needn't fear that he will become a pedant. You will make your academies better places, for you will let the winds of the world blow through them, when you open them to the Many instead of the Few, and you will make a great nation, for the Many will be also the Best."

So far as Cadmus and Harmonia have a message for their generation, this is it. And for the wisdom and humanity of it we may perhaps forgive them the appalling bathos of making the speaker slip away from the company which is still under the spell of his words, to "go for a walk with Phyllis in the garden."

R. F. A. H.

The Case for Capitalism

The Case for Capitalism, by Hartley Withers. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co.

SUPPOSE that down to the present time mankind had lived under the various conceivable forms of communism and socialism; would it not have been easy for agitators possessed of the historical learning of Karl Marx, the industry of the Webbs and the wit of Bernard Shaw to draw up an ideal capitalistic state so entrancing as to make all generous souls long to realize it, by bloody revolution if necessary? That ideal state, to be sure, would not look much like the capitalism of today. Everything in the ideal state would be deduced logically from the essential principles. Nothing could be less true of capitalism as we know it.

The capitalism which Mr. Withers sets out to defend stands about halfway between the actuality and a figment of roseate imagination. He talks about banks and railways, about the claims of labor and the facts of increased production since the Middle Ages, and thus convinces you that he did not gather his facts exclusively from the moon. But observe this moonshine: "Capitalism leaves the question (of value) to be decided by competition, so putting the ultimate decision concerning the price of any article of common use into the hands of the consumer." And this: "In the first place, there is (in capitalism) the moral advantage involved by individual choice and responsibility which make men and women of us, while grandmotherly regulations under State or Guild monopoly would make us into machines." Mr. Withers does not admit any of the facts of monopoly into his ideal capitalistic state. He refuses to know anything about price fixing committees, about wants and values created by advertising, about men who feel that they are working for "the boss," not for themselves. By omitting about all the vices of which real capitalism stands convicted, he succeeds in making it contrast favorably with communism and guild socialism, pictured as he pictures them in the darkest colors he can command.

That sort of thing went very well before the war. It was sold at a high price in most colleges under the name of "Critique of Socialism." To men who pride themselves on their imperviousness to new ideas and their immunity to facts, Mr. Withers's book will give real pleasure. It will prove disappointing to those who recognize the fact that capitalism, as we know it, is seriously challenged by the times, and who wish light on the question whether capitalism can not gain a new hold on life through the excision of the ulcers that have eaten into its tissues through a century of laissez-faire. On such questions the light of Withers is foggy darkness.

A. J.

A Shell-Shock Novel

Peter Jameson, by Gilbert Frankau. New York: A. A. Knopf.

PETER JAMESON belongs to the large class of what may fairly be called shell-shock novels. The author's nerves are still raw and quivering from the effects of the War. His sense of proportion is lost; his characters are flat and unnatural; his style is affected and grandiloquent.

Peter Jameson is a hustling, aggressive English businessman, completely absorbed in the management of a tobacco business. He and his wife, Patricia, have never made any pretense of being in love with each other. The War liquidates this domestic problem instantaneously. Peter enlists. Straightway his wife falls madly in love with him, nurses him through a mental breakdown, and finally wins his full devotion in return.

Mr. Frankau dedicates his novel to "the average man and woman of the English-speaking peoples." It faithfully presents the viewpoint of a distinctly sub-average British officer, limited at every turn by obsessions of military and social caste. Mr. Frankau seems to share Mr. Coningsby Dawson's conviction that the War was won by a select group of British combat officers, with some casual assistance from the men, and in the face of manifold sins and blunders on the part of Parliament, the staff officers, labor and the profiteers.

The vivid battle descriptions that are the best part of the book cannot atone for its essential narrowness and shallowness, for its manifold defects of thought and style, for its systematic glorification of hates and follies and prejudices that were scarcely excusable even in the heat of the conflict. Peter Jameson is the product of a mind still inflamed by the fever of war.

W. H. C.

Contributors

WALTER LOCKE is editorial writer on the Nebraska State Journal, a newspaper whose genuine progressivism long antedated the formation of the Progressive party and has since survived unabated.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED